

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 LAGOS 08361 01 OF 02 071533Z
ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----046824 071540Z /45

P R 071350Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 9337
INFO AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY NIAMEY
AMEMBASSY OUAGADOUGOU
AMEMBASSY PARIS
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
USINT HAVANA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW RYW
AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY RABAT

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 LAGOS 8361

EXDIS

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: CF, XA, XJ
SUBJECT: AFRICAN PROBLEM SOLVING BY AFRICANS: AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S
JUNE 14 CABLE

REF: STATE 153145
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 08361 01 OF 02 071533Z

1. REFTTEL CAME TO MY ATTENTION ONLY A FEW DAYS AGO AS I TRANSITED
OUAGADOUGOU EN ROUTE TO LAGOS FROM LEAVE. I RECOGNIZE THAT THE
FOLLOWING PERSONAL COMMENTS, ADDITIONAL TO BUT NOT IN CONFLICT
WITH THIS EMBASSY'S EARLIER RESPONSE (LAGOS 7552), ARE THUS TOO
LATE FOR INCORPORATION IN THE AFRICAN BUREAU'S RECAPITULATION OF
POST REPLIES. WE FIND YOUR MISE AU POINT IN STATE 168684

A REASONABLE AND USEFUL APPROACH TO AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S THOUGHTFUL AND PROVOCATIVE SUGGESTIONS. MY COMMENTS MAY NONETHELESS BE OF SOME RELEVANCE.

2. AMBASSADOR YOUNG SAYS WE MUST NOT ALLOW THE AFRICANS TO ESCAPE THE LESSON OF SHABA. DO WE IN FACT HAVE A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF PRECISELY WHAT THE LESSON IS? I WOULD SUGGEST WE SHOULD DISCUSS THIS FURTHER AMONG OURSELVES BEFORE WE INSTRUCT AFRICANS ON THE SUBJECT. IN THIS CONNECTION, WE MUST BE PREPARED FOR CONSIDERABLE "INSTRUCTION" FROM THEM. MANY AFRICANS BELIEVE THAT OUR PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION'S POLICIES AND MORE RECENT HESITATIONS AND INFLEXIBILITIES CONCERNING ANGOLA AND ZAIRE MUST SHARE SOME OF THE BLAME FOR SHABA I AND II. MCHENRY'S TRIP TO LUANDA IS A REFRESHING EXCEPTION TO OUR HEAD-IN-THE-SAND APPROACH TO RELATIONS WITH ANGOLA, RELATIONS WHICH MAY BE A KEY TO NAMIBIAN INDEPENDENCE, A VIABLE ZAMBIAN ECONOMY, AND PERHAPS THE FUTURE OF SHABA. FAR MORE IS THUS AT STAKE FOR US INTERESTS IN ANGOLA THAN THE MERE QUESTION OF UNSEEMLY CUBAN PRESENCE.

3. THE TONE OF PARAGRAPHS A AND B OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S LETTER PUZZLES US. IT IS ONE THING TO DISCUSS A PROBLEM WITH AFRICAN LEADERS. IT IS SOMETHING ELSE TO DO SO WITH A VIEW TO INSTRUCTING THEM IN ESSENTIAL WISDOM. WE HAVE MAINTAINED A REASONABLY GOOD RECORD ON THIS SCORE OVER THE PAST TWO YEARS. THE THRUST OF THESE PARAGRAPHS SEEMS TO GO IN ANOTHER DIRECTION.

SECRET

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 08361 01 OF 02 071533Z

4. WE ARE ALSO CURIOUS ABOUT THE STATEMENT THAT AFRICANS SHOULD UNDERSTAND THE IMPORT OF "STRENGTHENING THE POLITICAL AND INSTITUTIONAL OBSTACLES TO OUTSIDE INTERVENTION." WE WOULD HAVE THOUGHT THAT AFRICANS ARE ALREADY PAINFULLY AWARE OF THEIR SHORTFALL IN THIS REGARD.

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PAGE 01 LAGOS 08361 02 OF 02 071559Z
ACTION SS-25

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AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
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S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 LAGOS 8361

EXDIS

5. ARE WE PERSUADED THAT A SHORT-TERM CUBAN/SOVIET ACTIVITY WILL NECESSARILY BECOME LONG-TERM? IN OTHER WORDS, IS IT NOT POSSIBLE THAT CUBAN/SOVIET ACTIVISM CONTAINS WITHIN ITSELF THE SEEDS OF ITS EVENTUAL DISCREDITATION AND DEMISE? OBASANJO'S REPORTED MESSAGE TO CASTRO IS AN ENCOURAGING SIGN OF CUBAN ACTIVISM PRODUCING AFRICAN RESISTANCE WITHOUT PRODDING FROM US. HAVE WE ADEQUATELY EXAMINED WHETHER CONFRONTATION OF CUBAN/SOVIET MILITARY ACTIVITIES (E.G. COMPETITION IN KIND) WILL EFFECTIVELY
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PAGE 02 LAGOS 08361 02 OF 02 071559Z

REDUCE THEM RATHER THAN SPUR THEM ON? FINALLY, SHOULD WE NOT BE MORE CLEAR IN OUR OWN MINDS CONCERNING THE ROLE (IF ANY) THAT THE US SHOULD PLAY IN THE LIGHT OF ROLES OF OTHERS (E.G., FRENCH, BELGIANS, MOROCCANS, SENEGALESE, SAUDI ARABIANS, ETC.).

6. WE SHOULD BE WARY OF GENERALIZATIONS WITH REGARD TO THE VARIOUS FOYERS OF CUBAN AND SOVIET ACTIVITIES. CUBAN TROOPS INVITED TO COUNTER SOMALI'S INVASION OF THE OGADEN ARE PRESUMABLY LESS DISAGREEABLE TO US THAN SOUTH AFRICAN TROOPS UNINVITED IN ANGOLA. WHERE ON THE SCALE ARE CUBAN-TRAINED KATANGESE GOING HOME TO UNSEAT AN UNPOPULAR TYRANT, WEIGHED AGAINST ERITREAN DISSIDENTS FUNDED AND EXHORTED BY RED SEA NEIGHBORS? HOW DO WE VIEW CUBAN TRAINING OF NKOMO'S GUERRILLAS IN THE LIGHT OF PRESSURE THE "CUBAN THREAT," ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL, PUTS ON SMITH TO BEND TOWARD THE A-A PLAN?

7. AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S SUGGESTION OF AFRICAN RECOURSE TO THE SECURITY COUNCIL HAS MERIT. IT SHOULD BE TRIED MORE OFTEN. ON THE OTHER HAND, I HAVE MISGIVINGS ABOUT THE POLICY STRAIT JACKET WE MIGHT BE IMPOSING ON OURSELVES IF WE WERE TO AGREE WITH THE SOVIET UNION MUTUALLY TO FOR SWEAR SUPPORT FOR INTERVENTION UNLESS ENDORSED BY THE SECURITY COUNCIL. IF SUCH AN AGREEMENT WERE TO BE CONSIDERED, WHY LIMIT IT TO THE SOVIET UNION. WHAT ABOUT CUBA, LIBYA, SOUTH AFRICA, ETC.?

8. WE SHARE AMBASSADOR YOUNG'S VIEW THAT A STUDY OF SUCH QUESTIONS AS THESE WOULD BE USEFUL AND OPPORTUNE AND WE ARE PLEASED THAT SUCH A STUDY IS NOW UNDERWAY. IN THE MEANTIME, MANY OF US ARE PRESUMABLY ALREADY DISCUSSING THESE KINDS OF QUESTIONS IN A VARIETY OF CONVERSATIONS WITH HOST-NATION OFFICIALS. IF ANY PARTICULAR AFRICAN LEADERS ARE TO BE SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL CONSULTATIONS, WE WOULD URGE THAT THE LIST INCLUDE MAJOR FRANCO-PHONE STATESMEN.

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PAGE 03 LAGOS 08361 02 OF 02 071559Z

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